Application Number 10/714358
Response to the Office Action dated 04/09/2008

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the remarks herein. Claims 1 and 30 are amended. Applicants have not added new matter. Support in the specification for the comparing and determining portion and the write control portion performing their functions simultaneously is given on page 16, lines 32-36; support for the read control portion and the run-length encoding portion performing their functions simultaneously is given on page 20, lines 13-20; and support for writing input data to the data buffer at the same time that output data is read from the data buffer is given on page 10, lines 22-36. Claims 1-30 are pending of which claims 4-18, 20-29 are withdrawn and claims 1-3, 19, and 30 are under consideration.

The rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Applicants conducted an interview with the Examiner wherein the rejection of claims 1-3, 19, and 30 as being anticipated by Hirano '474 (referring to US Patent 6961474, the English language equivalent of PCT WO994/44368) was discussed. The Examiner explained his position. The Examiner further indicated that the operation of two data streams in parallel is an improvement over the cited art. In view of the interview, Applicants amend the claims to particularly point out and distinctly claims the operations performed on input data simultaneously with operation performed on output data. Hirano '474 does not teach or suggest a write control portion that updates addresses and writes input data to the data buffer at the same time that the comparing and determining portion determines whether each individual data unit of the input data has a value of 0 (zero); or a read control portion that reads output data from the data buffer at the same time that the run-length encoding portion performs calculates the interval between the bit position corresponding to the current data selectively read out of the information register and the bit position corresponding to the last output data selectively read out from the data buffer; or that input data is written into the data buffer simultaneously with output data from the data buffer being transferred to the run-length encoding portion, as required by claims 1 and 19.

14

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Thus, because Hirano '474 does not teach at all the claimed elements, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 1-3, 19, and 30 under 35 USC §102(b) be withdrawn. Applicants further maintain that Hirano '474 does not suggest the claimed invention. Hirano '474, in fact, is more akin to the conventional encoding portion shown in Applicants' Figure 32 and would have a decreased speed of the encoding process, the shortcomings of the conventional encoding, as explained in ¶[0012] of Applicants' publication.

Applicants assert that claims 2, 3 and 30 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence upon claim 1. Applicants do not concede the correctness of the rejection. Applicants invite the Examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney if there are minor corrections or minor issues that remain before allowance of the case.

Respectfully submitted,

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15